

Commodifying Tragedy: Representing Violence against Native American Women in *The Cold Dish* and *Longmire*

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ABSTRACT By focusing on the representation of violence against Native American women in Craig Johnson's *The Cold Dish* and the television show *Longmire*, this article demonstrates how these cultural productions perpetuate settler-colonial power relations. Although *Longmire* is one of the more progressive shows thanks to its development of Native American characters and storylines, the settler-colonial status quo is affirmed in four main ways. Not only do the novel and TV show redeploy the racist stock characters of the Magical Indian and the White Savior, but the TV show especially also reiterates a version of the stereotypical Vanishing American narrative inherited from the Western genre. Furthermore, both cultural productions heavily pathologize the Cheyenne community, depriving them of agency. Finally, the novel and show both transform pain, suffering, and grief into transferable commodities. This allows them to disinvest the pain and tragedy suffered by the Native American characters in order to reinvest this tragic potential in white characters, which serves to reinforce the white characters' heroism. The commodification of tragic potential and emphasis on its sentimentalization help obscure the settler-colonial origins and systemic perpetuation of violence against Native American women. In sum, this analysis shows that the deeply ingrained and normalized settler-colonial ideology inherent to representational strategies limit the progressive potential of even the most benevolent and well-meaning white cultural productions.

KEYWORDS violence, representation, women, Indigenous studies, crime fiction

"I believe that whites do have a particular obligation to stand against racism. We are the ones who created racism, we are the ones who benefit from it, we are the ones who keep it going, and therefore we are the ones with the responsibility to end it. At the very least, this responsibility places the burden on white writers to avoid reproducing racist ideology in their fiction. It also means that whites should remain conscious of the racist foundations of their success when they appropriate the lives of people of color in order to sell books. It does not mean that white writers should avoid writing about characters of color. On the contrary, in fact, such avoidance also reproduces the racial status quo. It does mean that white writers of crime fiction need to be alert to the role that genre fiction plays in constructing and maintaining racial divides in the social world and to recognize their role in that process. It also means that readers, especially white readers, need to learn vigilance in reading in order to resist their own otherwise endless interpellation as complacent racists." – Maureen Reddy, *Traces, Codes, and Clues*¹

Violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual people (henceforth 2SLGBTQQIA people) is one of the most destructive aspects of settler colonialism. This violence is disproportionately frequent and brutal in regions colonially called the United States and Canada. It is a historical as well as a contemporary situation, which reiterates and perpetuates North America's settler colonialism including the imposition of a hetero-patriarchal, capitalist, and white-supremacist system onto Indigenous lands and nations. As much in Canada as in the United States, scholars such as Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Seneca), Joanne Barker (Lenape), Sherene Razack (settler), Robyn Bourgeois (Cree), and Sarah Deer (Muscogee Cree), as well as NGOs, and grassroots organizations agree that this disproportionate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is a direct consequence of settler colonialism. In *Mark My Words*, Mishuana Goeman demonstrates how mapping practices and spatial strategies more in general frame, inform, and create the conditions for and the necessity of violence against Indigenous women and girls for the settler-colonial regime.² Other sources such as *Critically Sovereign*, edited by Joanne Barker; *Race, Space, and the Law*, edited by Sherene Razack, including, specifically, her chapter "Gendered Racial Violence and Spatialized Justice"; Robyn Bourgeois's contribution to *Keetsahnak: Our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Sisters, "Generations of Genocide"*; as well as Sarah Deer's landmark contribution to the field, *The Beginning and the End of Rape*⁷ discuss how binary gender norms and gender violence are inherent to settler colonialism.³ Similar conclusions on the central role of settler colonialism and settler governments in the creation of violence against Indigenous women have been drawn by such humanitarian and/or grassroots organizations as Amnesty International—specifically in their reports *Maze of Injustice* and *Stolen Sisters*—and the Native Women's Association of Canada, as well as, finally, by the Canadian National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls which published its final report, *Reclaiming Power and Place*, in June 2019.⁴ They further agree that this state of increased vulnerability and precariousness is perpetuated by the settler-colonial states of Canada and the United States through inaction, inappropriate or negligent responses, systemic racism and sexism, and lack of due diligence.

Because violence against women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is deeply anchored in settler-colonial ideology, its representation in white cultural productions is fraught with racial and colonial power. This article examines the representation of violence against Indigenous women in Craig Johnson's novel, *The Cold Dish* (2004), and the television show, *Longmire* (2012–2017).⁵ While insisting that especially the television show offers complex Native American characters and storylines, which is unprecedented for such a popular show, this essay analyzes the innate and naturalized settler-colonial character of Indigenous people's representation in *The Cold Dish* and *Longmire*. Both cultural productions are particularly revealing of settler-colonial attitudes in their treatment of violence against Native American women. I argue that these cultural productions reinforce settler-colonial power relations by perpetuating damaging stereotypes of Indigenous people and commodifying the tragic potential ascribed to violence against Indigenous women for white profit.

White cultural productions often depict violence against Indigenous people in a way that reproduces settler-colonial values and power relations even when trying to include a more diverse range of representation and creating a space for Indigenous representations. Even worse, white cultural productions representing violence against Indigenous women, such as the TV show *Longmire* or the 2017 movie *Wind River* commodify the tragic potential of the depiction of the disproportionate violence perpetuated against Indigenous people.⁶ As this article will show, this commodification serves to enhance white, mostly male, heroism. The show *Longmire* is based on Johnson's crime novels; *The Cold Dish* is the first of his Western-crime novels called the Walt Longmire series. Such literary and cultural genres as crime fiction and the Western, which Craig Johnson's work combines, are especially and deeply anchored in settler colonialism.⁷ Even if crime fiction and TV shows are often dismissed as popular productions, *Longmire* and Johnson's Walt Longmire series have been internationally successful and have an important cultural outreach. The popularity and broad, international impact of these works is a testament to why it is important to understand and critique how their representations of violence against Indigenous women and girls does nothing to dismantle the settler-colonial values that produce this violence and only serves to reinforce white heroism and settler-colonial ideology.

This fraught representation is why, even today, Maureen Reddy's powerful words on the responsibility of white authors and readers in the epigraph still need recalling and implementing. In *Shaman or Sherlock*, one of the few studies on what authors Gina Macdonald and Andrew Macdonald have termed "Native American crime fiction," they explain the success of fictional Native American detectives as a contemporary reiteration of "an old American theme: the Indian as a marginal figure on the border of civilization, a guide, an escort, or a companion into a darker and freer world, and sometimes a mentor or a guru who teaches a secret wisdom."⁸ This book, along with Ray B. Browne's *Murder on the Reservation*,⁹ examines two types of works of crime fiction, both of which, they argue, equally belong to the subgenre of "American Indian crime fiction." On the one hand, they mention Native American authors who write crime fiction, like Choctaw and Cherokee writer Louis Owens, Choctaw author LeAnne Howe, or Cherokee novelist Mardi Oakley Medawar.¹⁰ On the other hand, they include white writers, who use Native American characters or cultural heritage, like Tony Hillerman, Margaret Coel, or James D. Doss. These two studies uncritically merge two categories of texts by conflating forms of Native

American cultural expressions with representations of Native Americans that perpetuate cultural appropriation and reinforce damaging stereotypes. These stereotypes have emerged throughout the genocidal settler-colonial history of the United States, as is evident in Macdonald and Macdonald's description of the Native American detective.¹¹ By color-blindly focusing on generic adaptations of crime fiction, these critics hardly give any attention to the governing power relations at work when white authors exploit Native American cultural heritage for economic profit.

These naturalized stereotypes are deeply ingrained in US state-making narratives and policies that simultaneously build the nation and obscure the genocidal violence of nation-building processes. As Tiffany Lethabo King asserts in *The Black Shoals*, "This aspect of conquest, a violent and repetitive process of making the modern human through extinguishing Black and Indigenous life, is disavowed and willfully forgotten."¹² This intentional historical amnesia, repeatedly produced, of the fact that white personhood is built through genocide normalizes white supremacy and the existing exploitative dynamics that produce violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA today. These violences are constructed as something not out of the ordinary, to mention only one consequence of stereotypes.

In *Playing Indian*, Philip Deloria (Dakota) demonstrates the nationalist dynamics of the performance of stereotypes by exploring the ways in which white people have appropriated "Indianness" to construct "Americanness" from the Boston Tea Party to the 1960s.¹³ He asserts that "in every instance, playing Indian represented, evaded, and perpetuated those relations [of dominated and dominator, or colonized and colonizer]. Indianness was the bedrock for creative American identities, but it was also one of the foundations (slavery and gender relations being two others) for imagining and performing domination and power in America."¹⁴ Put differently, stereotypes of Indigenous people not only inform US settler identity, but the performance of them also serves to maintain settler-colonial power relations. In a similar vein, Hernan Vera and Andrew Gordon affirm in *Screen Saviors* that such stock characters as the ethnic sidekick or the white savior serve to perpetuate white privilege as it "persists today largely through the symbolic labor of sincere fictions that attempt to efface the memory of the origins of white privilege [in genocide, slavery, and colonial rule] and to deny its continuing existence and appalling results."¹⁵ By replacing real depictions of power relations with the stereotypes built into stock characters, these representational projects inform sociopolitical reality by affording support for white people seeking to maintain white power and to disavow the consequences of settler colonialism. In short, these representational strategies exert considerable violence.

This essay seeks to counter such color-blind literary criticism as in *Shaman or Sherlock or Murder on the Reservation* by providing a critical analysis of the appropriation of Native American cultural heritage, the creation of Native American characters, and the commodification of the tragic potential ascribed to violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, firstly, in Craig Johnson's *The Cold Dish* and, secondly, in the derived television show, *Longmire*. I hope that such an analysis contributes to avoiding and resisting the perpetuation of damaging stereotypes which participate in the maintenance of settler-colonial power relations and white supremacy in US society.

The previously mentioned studies by Browne and Macdonald and Macdonald as well as white crime fiction authors' exploitation of Native American cultural heritage are typical for what Jodi Melamed has described as neoliberal multiculturalism because of their emphasis on diversity without examination of racial and classist power relations. In *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*, Melamed describes this attitude to race and capitalist practices which deliberately erases the racial power relations reinforcing white supremacy, especially in literary criticism, to be typical for contemporary studies on "ethnic" fiction because "neoliberal multiculturalism has portrayed an ethic of multiculturalism to be the spirit of neoliberalism."¹⁶ In other words, neoliberal multiculturalism not only obscures the fact that there is a direct connection between the colonial socioeconomic system, which presently allows and historically has allowed the US to thrive, and the exploitation of racialized bodies, but also implies its own form as the only possible anti-racism. The colonial socioeconomic system thus exploits racialized people for economic and political profit at the high costs of these racialized bodies while neoliberal multiculturalism veils the fact that capitalist modes of production are still racialized through its emphasis on diversity. The manner in which Native American characters are exploited in the novel and the show both contribute to this neoliberal multiculturalism through the commodification of emotions. More specifically, tragic or emotional potential ascribed to racialized bodies—in this case, Native American characters—and their tales of woe are extracted or dissociated from these characters in order to be reinvested for the profit of white characters who remain at the center of these cultural productions' melodrama.

This veiling of power relations is especially problematic when examining a genre such as crime fiction that engages with Native American cultures. This genre, along with the genre of the Western, has an explicitly racist past and is still largely dominated by white authors, which leads to an economic dynamic where white people profit from Native American cultural heritage. When white authors use Native American characters or cultures in their fiction, they end up prescribing, once again, what Native American culture is and how Native Americans behave. Crucially, the issue at stake is not one of authenticity, but rather how this dynamic of cultural production enables a perpetuation and reinforcement of settler practices, which emerged with captivity narratives as well as novels such as James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826).¹⁷ The settler-colonial nature of these national narratives is an extension of the colonization of the North American continent intrinsic to the foundation of the United States.¹⁸ The narratives studied here maintain racial, gendered, and classed power relations, particularly through exploiting Native Americans for profit, at the same time as they preserve oppressive representational practices and preclude sovereign, Indigenous self-representation.

Obscuring the Settler-Colonial Roots of Violence in *The Cold Dish*

Violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is a form of violence which is characterized by settler colonialism and shows settler understandings of and

attitudes toward law, gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and nationality. Gender and sexual violence against Indigenous people crystallizes and epitomizes the settler-colonial project, including its successes and failures, as systemic forms of violence converge with intimate forms of violence pertaining to gender and sexual identities as well as the interruption of Indigenous kinship systems. Examining violence against women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people requires an intersectional and anti-colonial approach which considers the interaction of oppressive categories to explore the power relations at work that produce disproportionate violence against Indigenous people. However, without wanting to obscure violence against 2SLGBTQQIA people, this article focuses on violence against cisgender women who are survivors of heterosexual gender violence because its primary sources, *The Cold Dish* and *Longmire*, solely focus on this version of sexual violence. Of course, the absence of nonbinary gender identities and nonheterosexual sexual identities in these works testifies to a Euro-Western perspective which conceals Indigenous gender and sexual identities. In other words, this focus on heterosexual violence against cisgender women is a first instance that reveals how white cultural productions, which hardly ever stray away from binary gender norms and heteronormativity, perhaps inadvertently, reinforce settler-colonial values.

The protagonist of Johnson's *The Cold Dish*, Absaroka County Sheriff Walt Longmire, connects two different sexual assault cases to his investigation of the murder of Cody Pritchard. In this investigation, he is not only supported by the sheriff department's secretary, Ruby, and his deputies, Victoria Moretti, Jim Ferguson, and Turk Connally. But Walt is also significantly helped by his best friend, Henry Standing Bear, member of the Cheyenne nation and owner of a local bar called The Red Pony. Except for Turk Connally, these are all recurrent characters in the Walt Longmire series, which, to date, counts eighteen novels, two novellas, two collections of short stories, and which has spawned the TV show *Longmire*, all of which have generated significant commercial success.

Although the book series is multicultural in its attention to various ethnic minorities and Native American nations, it also regularly exploits Native American characters by employing stereotypes which profit solely the white hero. Johnson's stories feature diverse characters including from the Basque and Asian American communities as well as members of different Native American nations, especially the Cheyenne and the Crow. Rachel Schaffer has argued that Johnson "presents characters that form their communities in fully inclusive fashion but more as a mosaic than a melting pot, where individual differences add to the beauty and vibrancy of the whole rather than losing their distinctiveness through assimilation."¹⁹ Admittedly, his books confront, often in non-simplifying ways, various issues in connection to these characters. While Schaffer is right in pointing out that Johnson offers some of the most complex representations of non-white characters and storylines in American crime fiction, Johnson's work retains the settler-colonial practice of exploiting racialized characters for the profit of white ones. Consequently, this diversity does not dissolve Reddy's "hegemony of whiteness," perpetuated by the exploitation of such stereotypes as the Magical Indian.²⁰

The problematic power relations do not so much emerge from the direct ways Johnson treats others as from the ways Walt's white, hetero-masculinist heroism is constructed at the cost of, predominantly, his best friend, Henry. This is most plainly illustrated in the

mountain scene of *The Cold Dish*: after the body of a teenager called Jacob Esper is found in the Bighorn Mountains, Walt, Henry, and Omar (a friend and helicopter owner) have to search for and save Jacob's brother, George, despite a snowstorm. After finding George and fighting with him, which leaves both George and Henry injured, Walt finds himself forced to hike the considerable distance from the mountains to the nearest parking lot twice while the snowstorm is raging in order to save George and Henry. As Walt starts walking he receives help from the Old Cheyenne who are voiced through Henry's unconscious singing. The heroism of Walt is therefore constructed by deploying Henry's character as a "Magical Indian" and Walt as the "White Savior" while playing Indian.²¹ Deloria describes the concept of "playing Indian" as white men who appropriate Indianness in order to construct their national identity. The mixture of being a White Savior and playing Indian in the character of Walt Longmire does nothing to dismantle the unconscious workings of white supremacy. As George Lipsitz states in his book *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*, "Our history and our fiction contain all too many accounts of whites acting with unctuous paternalism to protect 'helpless' people of color, but very few stories about white people opposing white supremacy on their own."²² Johnson's use of Native American characters, while more complex than in most works by white authors of crime fiction, remains an exploitative use of race, which serves to construct the white protagonist's heroism.

The textual settler-colonial power relations at work become especially problematic with the treatment of violence against Native American women in Johnson's *The Cold Dish*. In this novel, the murder of Cody Pritchard reminds Absaroka County Sheriff Walt Longmire of a sexual assault case, where Cheyenne teenager Melissa Little Bird was brutally gang raped by four white teenagers (Cody Pritchard, Jacob and George Esper, and Bryan Keller). This case is haunting because of its brutality and because the white boys have received little to no sentences, which gave Melissa and her family neither justice nor closure. However, Walt's murder investigation reveals that the murder is only indirectly connected to Melissa Little Bird's case. We learn that it is Vonnie Hayes, a wealthy, white woman who shot these boys. Her motive is to restore a sense of justice for Melissa, Vonnie claims, as well as for herself since, during her childhood, Vonnie had been sexually abused by her father while her mother helped to keep these repeated abuses secret. By drawing a direct comparison between the two cases, the violence Vonnie experienced and committed stand in for and replace the violence Melissa and her family experienced. Consequently, the novel discusses violence against women in a way that ignores past and on-going settler colonialism, race, and socioeconomic power relations.

Despite its constructions of diversity and respect toward Native American communities, particularly the Cheyenne, the novel's inherent settler-colonial power relations and white privilege lingers especially in the direct comparison between violence against Indigenous women and violence against white women. To directly compare violence against Native American and white women effaces the systemic, racist, and settler-colonial nature of the violence faced by Native American women, including the way that white women and white womanhood has contributed to gendered violence against Native Americans. Crucially, the point here is not to argue that violence against Native American women is more condemnable than violence against white women. Instead, it is critical to point out that to reduce violence against Native American women and against white women to a common

denominator reveals the lingering settler-colonial character of Johnson's work because it obscures the settler-colonial nature of violence against Native American women and because it commodifies the tragic potential ascribed to this violence.

Despite *The Cold Dish's* simplification of all sexual violence to the same, the violence Native American women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people face is uniquely shaped and nourished by the on-going imperialist power struggle of the United States against Native American nations, especially the systematic impunity experienced by perpetrators.²³ Native American women suffer violence at disproportionate rates. The 2007 Amnesty International report, *Maze of Injustice*, states that "Native American and Alaska Native women are more than 2.5 times more likely to be raped or sexually assaulted than women in the USA in general."²⁴ In addition, a 2000 study from the US Department of Justice reveals that 34.1 percent of Native American women will be raped during their lifetime, which is by far the highest rate in the nation.²⁵ However, because an unknown number of rape cases are never reported and because homeless people are generally not included in these statistics, this figure is suspected to be even higher still. More recently, André B. Rosay's 2016 Research Report of the National Institute of Justice states that an astonishing 84.3 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence, 56.1 percent of whom have experienced sexual violence.²⁶ Rape and sexual violence are therefore not a rare occurrence for Native American women, but a concrete and recurrent reality which is an assault not only against Native American women but also against their communities.

Not only is violence against Native American women disproportionately frequent, but its settler-colonial character renders it systemic. In her book, *The Beginning and the End of Rape*, Sarah Deer (Muscogee Cree) expands on the above-mentioned statistics by adding that "there appears to be a particularly brutal physicality in assaults on Native women."²⁷ She continues by pointing out that while the vast majority of rape cases in the United States are intraracial (meaning that the perpetrator and victim are of the same race), Native American women report that "the majority of assailants are non-Native . . . This is an anomaly in American criminology; violent crime in America is almost always intraracial."²⁸ As alarming a picture as these statistics already paint, it is rendered worse by the lack of support from authorities for victims of violence. Scholars, NGOs, and grassroots organizations working to prevent violence against Native American women agree the settler-colonial state enables increased vulnerability and precarity for Native American women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people through competing jurisdictions that create impunity, disempowering tribal authorities, and/or inappropriate or negligent responses. As Mishuana Goeman crisply states, "For Indigenous women, the heteropatriarchal state is the violent actor, not the protector of rights."²⁹ In sum, Native American women face a settler-colonial assault on Indigenous sovereignty that enables mostly white men to abuse Indigenous women with a frequency and violence on a genocidal scale. These crimes serve not only to confirm the control of one gender over the other, but also to perpetually reaffirm the white-American dominance over Indigenous lands and communities that is necessary to the national narrative of white American land ownership and identity.

The settler-colonial roots of violence against Native American women and the disproportionate levels of occurrence and brutality of violence against Native American women are what is masked when Johnson equates violence against Native American women with violence against white women. More problematically still, Johnson commodifies its tragic potential by extracting it from Melissa's narrative in order to reinvest it in the construction of the tragic white victim. This is why Johnson's treatment of violence against Native American women in *The Cold Dish* is harmful and imbued with white privilege. Consider the following passage in which Walt is trying to process the case and ponders the ways in which Melissa's and Vonnie's families reacted to the trauma of sexual assault:

I thought about how the two women's situations were alike, and how different the two cultures' reactions were. When Melissa had met this crisis in her life, her family and friends had restored her, but when Vonnie had faced abuse, she had met silence and recrimination, and the violation done to her child's soul had been swept under the Turkish rugs. Granted, it could be said that it was the times and not the culture that had dictated these reactions, and I hoped that was true. I really did.³⁰

While this passage might be read as a compliment to Native American strength, sense of community, and resilience, the moral emerging from this statement is troubling. According to this quote, Walt implies that Melissa has fared better than Vonnie in their respective story of sexual abuse because Vonnie's suffering is exacerbated by the lack of support and cumulative trauma she experienced in the aftermath of the abuse. However, while Walt rightly states that white, bourgeois patriarchy bears the main responsibility for Vonnie's actions, to conclude that Melissa has been "restored" bears the risk of negating her suffering and obscuring the enormous amount of violence Native American women are exposed to because of the imposition of Christian, capitalist, white patriarchy. The tragic and emotional potential ascribed to Melissa's case is taken from her and her community to be transferred to Vonnie, who, as Walt's love interest and an eventual suicide victim unable to overcome her trauma, is presented as the more tragic victim in the story. The cultural practice of extracting the tragic potential ascribed to other, mostly racialized, characters for the construction of the tragic or heroic attribute of the white protagonist is, similarly to the Magical Indian, a discursive strategy that is employed in order to justify the white characters' actions and increase their tragic heroism. Since Johnson barely denounces and fails to further discuss the ramifications of violence against Native American women, the evocation of this issue conforms to its neoliberal multicultural era in its superficiality and eventual profit to the white characters and author by enhancing the tragedy of Native American characters to commodify it for white profit.

The concealment of Native American suffering for the profit of white characters is worsened by the racist representative strategy of pathologizing Melissa and her father, whereas Vonnie is framed as a rational, beautiful, and desirable businesswoman. The various ways in which dysfunctions of Cheyenne characters are highlighted reinforce the suspicion that the earlier argument of community support and cultural difference is a backhanded compliment, which insidiously serves to paint the Cheyenne community with a broad brush. The pathologization of Native Americans is particularly strong in *The Cold Dish*: while Melissa suffers from fetal alcohol syndrome, her father has lost both legs to

diabetes and lives in poverty. To portray the Native American sexual assault survivor and her family as pathological is damaging for three reasons. Firstly, it increases Melissa's victimization and, therefore, tragic potential; secondly, it deprives her and her father of agency; and, thirdly, it augments the white hero in his legitimacy as white savior. Moreover, in her article "Imagining the Good Indigenous Citizen," Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson explains the logic of pathologizing Indigenous peoples:

The individualism of neoliberalism informs the discourse of pathology within the race war, enabling the impoverished conditions under which Indigenous people live to be rationalised as a product of dysfunctional cultural traditions and individual bad behavior. In this context Indigenous pathology, not the strategies and tactics of patriarchal white sovereignty, is presented as inhibiting the realization of the state's earlier policy of self-determination.³¹

In other words, Moreton-Robinson underlines that the main problem with pathologizing Indigenous peoples is that instead of dismantling the real origins of this state in settler colonialism, this discursive and representational strategy presents pathology as inherent to Indigenous individuals in order to remove agency and sovereignty from them and legitimize putting it in the hands of white people. In short, to pathologize Indigenous communities is nothing but a rhetorical strategy to legitimize the settler-colonial rule over them. Precisely this strategy is also applied in *The Cold Dish*: Melissa and her family are relegated to the position of pathologized, passive, and emotionally exploitable background figures while Walt and Vonnie possess all the agency. Giving more visibility to the important sociopolitical issue of violence against Native American women in this novel only serves to enhance the glory of white salvation through the pathologization of the Cheyenne community in order to legitimate the existing settler-colonial status quo. The inherent reinforcement of white privilege and superiority in these representational strategies echo Indigenous feminists' critique of whitestream feminism which Moreton-Robinson summarizes as the following: "Colonial processes have shaped white feminists' oblivion to their race privilege and their indifference to the history of their relations with Indigenous women. The exercising of white race privilege therefore remains uninterrogated."³² In other words, the concealment of the settler-colonial origins of contemporary violence against Indigenous women and the obscuring of race as a sociopolitical category of oppression only serves to reinforce white supremacy as inherent element of contemporary US society.

Assuaging White Guilt in *Longmire*

While the television show develops Native personas and their storylines into complex characters and addresses important settler-colonial issues on Native American land, there remains a pronounced undercurrent of white privilege and settler colonialism throughout the show. The show *Longmire* was launched in 2012. It was produced by A&E for the first three seasons and by Netflix for the last three seasons. This show is noteworthy in terms of the attention it gives to Native American issues and in terms of its vast popularity. It received good reviews, especially for its narrative strands, the cast's acting, and, most of

all, for the attention it pays to Native American issues, as comments from the Native American cast illustrate. Navajo actor Jay Tavare, who appeared in the episode "Dogs, Horses, Indians," writes in his review published in *Huffpost* that "[b]esides giving us great drama, the show dares to address some very sensitive and current issues that face Indian country today."³³ Oneida actor Graham Greene, who plays Malachi Strand, formulates it more succinctly when he tweeted, "Longmire is the best show I ever had the opportunity to work on."³⁴ In the show, Walt Longmire is played by Robert Taylor, Victoria Moretti by Katee Sackhoff, and Henry Standing Bear by Lou Diamond Phillips. While the individual episodes are mostly based on Johnson's short stories or parts of novels, there are also more continuous narrative strands or characters not present in the mystery series. For example, the first three seasons' continuous narrative strand is the resolution of the murder of Martha, Walt's wife. From the third season onward until the end, the continuous and increasingly important strand is the narrative of Hector, a Cheyenne providing justice for his community where the federal and tribal authorities fail. In the last few seasons, Henry takes up this role. The narrative of Hector is especially interesting when it mixes with Gaby's narrative in the fourth season. Gaby is a young Cheyenne woman who is sexually assaulted by two white oil rig workers from a nearby man-camp. As she has been raped by two white men, her case illustrates the difficulty of investigating and convicting (especially white) perpetrators of crimes taking place on the reservation and how their impunity creates the need for alternative forms of justice for Indigenous people.

In many instances, the television show does not simply acknowledge issues that Native Americans face on a regular basis, but actually takes them as the central concern and drive of the intrigue. The impact of casinos on the Cheyenne and white communities is associated with the character of Jacob Nighthorse, who is a successful Cheyenne businessman, whereas the complexity and frequent corruption of the judicial system and law enforcement units is particularly well depicted in the interactions among Malachi Strand (the former Cheyenne tribal police chief played by Graham Greene), Mathias (the current Cheyenne tribal police chief played by Zahn McClarnon [Lakota]), and Walt. Individual episodes center on specific topics. For example, the episode "Dog Soldier" (Season 1, episode 5) depicts the complexity of Native families' frequent use of social services based on the real-world Native American overrepresentation in the US child welfare system.³⁵ "Tuscan Red" (Season 2, episode 9) examines the question of the pollution of tap water on the Cheyenne reservation by a fracking company just outside the reservation, which was of particular relevance considering the North Dakota Access Pipeline resistance.³⁶ Finally, "Miss Cheyenne" (season 3, episode 3) centers on the history and consequences of forced sterilization of Native women by white doctors.³⁷ Adolfo Larrue Martinez, who plays Jacob Nighthorse, applauds this attention to Native issues in an interview with Vincent Schilling for *Indian Country Today*:

During the “Dog Soldier” episode in the first season, they actually examined the concept of Native children being extracted from their homes and going into a foster care system and the bounties that went into play. We consulted with Native people from four different states who had direct experience with this issue. This is an issue that is generally ignored yet this show brought it to the public. The value of this is so rare. Other issues such as Methane in the water and Idle No More are generally off the radar. But the writers and producers see the value and they get the need to tell the stories. It is awesome that they embrace the stories of native people.³⁸

This show is therefore an impressive and economically successful first step in the inclusion and representation of Native American cast, characters, and stories.

However, despite the considerable improvements in Native American representation this show presents, important problems still remain especially in its representation of violence against Native American women. The show exhibits dynamics of white privilege and settler colonialism, as is illustrated in the episode “Unfinished Business” (Season 1, Episode 10), derived from Johnson’s first novel.³⁹ Whereas *The Cold Dish* uses Melissa’s tragic potential to enhance Vonnie’s story, the TV show pushes this strategy one step further into white fragility and delusional, settler martyrdom by transferring the tragic potential to one of the white perpetrators. In this episode of *Longmire*, the character who represents the novel’s Melissa Little Bird is called Yasha Roundstone. She lives with her grandmother, Elsie, and her brother Veeho. The four rapists also have different names: Cody Pritchard from the novel is Greg Morris, the second perpetrator is Paul Carter, while the two others are Jake Lennox, who is the designated leader of the group, and Richard Stark. The murder intrigue remains directly connected to Yasha’s rape case since, after Greg and Paul are murdered, Jake disappears. Eventually, we discover that Rich has killed his two friends and kidnapped Jake in order to punish them and himself for the rape of Yasha. In the penultimate scene when we see Walt trying to convince Rich not to kill Jake, Rich exclaims, “We raped Yasha and we never got punished” before apologizing profusely and claiming that Jake forced him to rape Yasha, which is also when we see two flashbacks of the rape from Rich’s perspective.⁴⁰ While Walt demonstrates a clear sympathy for the Roundstone family and the Cheyenne community, this narrative deflects the traumatic experience and main emotional experience onto Richard. Not only do the flashbacks from Rich’s perspective perpetuate the violent objectification of Yasha, but the violence she experiences is also used as a pretext for the white teenage boy’s trauma and white guilt, since these flashbacks express *his* traumatic memory rather than hers. “Unfinished Business” takes up the same discursive strategy as the novel where it extracts the tragic and emotional potential ascribed to the Native American survivor in order to reinvest it in one of her white perpetrators to increase his anti-heroism. Yet this instance of extracting the tragic potential ascribed to the Native American character is even more perverse than in the novel—and, therefore, more faithful to settler colonialism and white supremacy—because the Cheyenne survivor is discursively abused and exploited for the profit of one of her abusers.

Longmire returns to the topic of sexual assault in more depth and nuance in its fourth season, where, compared to the novels, the theme of violence against Native American women becomes central to the show’s storyline for half a season. Gabriella (called “Gab”)

Langton's narrative starts in "The Calling Back," the sixth episode of the fourth season. The gist of Gab's narrative is that she is raped by two oil-rig workers, Will and Taylor. While Walt, Vic, and Cady (Walt's daughter) try to help Gab, she is paralyzed by her traumatic experience, and her mother, Linda, has accepted a financial compensation from the oil company in order not to press charges. Later, Will is found dead and Taylor, while attempting to rape another young Cheyenne woman, is attacked by Henry and fatally shot by Gab, who was seeking revenge. Gab and Henry, who is wounded, escape. Later, Gab is chased by Walker Browning's (the oil-rig company owner) men. It comes to a stand-off between oil-rig workers and Walt, Henry, and Gab, who are helped by a Crow Medicine Woman. During the final confrontation, Gab mysteriously escapes in the form of a Red Tail Hawk, according to the Medicine Woman. The oil men who have not been shot are arrested. This narrative enables an exploration of the complexities of the topic of violence against Native American women, materialized, for instance, in the criminal justice system for on-reservation rape cases by white men and the criminal potential of so-called man-camps. Yet the discussion of each of these points is tainted by a lingering white supremacist ideology since the failure of the legal proceedings of Gab's case is eventually attributed to Linda's (Gab's mother) greed and addiction problems, and the problem of the sexually predatory behavior of the men from the oil-rig camp is solved by the vanishing of the Cheyenne woman.

In this manner, when the complexities of the criminal justice system are depicted, the blame for their failure falls onto Gab's mother. The show emphasizes especially one main issue which prevents Native American women from receiving justice in the existing criminal justice system: the problem of jurisdiction. When Walt and Mathias (the Cheyenne tribal police chief) are searching the crime scene together, Mathias states: "It happened on the rez, so you can't do anything. It was a white man, so I can't do anything. Neither of us can officially investigate this case."⁴¹ Mathias's blunt statement articulates the frustration of this jurisdictional no man's land. This only serves to strengthen the exploitation of young Cheyenne women because the white workers know that it is unlikely that they will be prosecuted. The federal authorities, who would be responsible for this case, rarely find or take the time to fulfill their responsibilities toward Indigenous nations, as is illustrated in Cady's efforts to find a federal prosecutor who will accept Gab's case. Yet, while the white heroes successfully manage to overcome all these obstacles, the blame for the failure of the legal procedures falls on Linda. While she is at first presented as a tough and hard-working woman, she quickly turns into a selfish, overly materialistic addict. In fact, when Walt interviews Gab for the second time and asks her what the workers, Gab and her friends did at the casino, Linda starts yelling at Gab, demanding to know where Gab was able to get the money to go to the casino. In the meantime, it becomes clear that Linda has received money from the oil company and refuses to press charges against the rapists, as becomes clear when she yells at Vic, Cady and Walt that "I don't need justice, I need to pay the rent. . . . A lot of bad things happen to a lot of women here. At least my daughter had the good luck to be raped by a white guy."⁴² The cruelty of her words serves to reinforce her pathologizing portrayal as a monstrous, greedy addict, which, in turn, divests the guilt and failure of the criminal justice system in order to reinvest it in Linda. As a result, not only is the systemic violence hardly criticized, but the stereotype that Native American communities are "the real problem" is reinforced.

Similarly, while the violent consequences of man camps near Native American reservations are shown, the conflict is resolved by reiterating the Vanishing American narrative.⁴³ During the final shootout in the last episode of the fourth season, Browning is hurt and, when Walt tries to find Gab again, the Crow Medicine Woman tells him that Gab has been transformed into a Red Tail Hawk, her spirit animal, and is now safe with her ancestors. While the actual origin of the violence, namely the presence of a large number of white oil-rig workers close to a reservation, stays in place, it is the Cheyenne survivor who literally and inexplicably vanishes from the show. This reiterates the many Vanishing American narratives which accompanied genocidal policies by discursively emptying the North American continent of its Indigenous populations and romanticizing the disappearance of Indigenous peoples in order to attenuate white guilt. Ultimately, while the show is progressive in the ways in which it depicts and develops Native American characters and storylines, it nonetheless still fails to develop them in a non-exploitative way.

Conclusion

Although *Longmire* was one of the most progressive shows of its time concerning its development of Native American characters and storylines, and Johnson's novel figures complex Native American characters, settler-colonialism is sustained through these works in three main ways. Not only do the novel and TV show redeploy the racist stock characters of the Magical Indian and the White Savior, but especially the TV show also reiterates a version of the stereotypical Vanishing American narrative inherited from the Western genre. Furthermore, both cultural productions heavily pathologize the Cheyenne community, which deprives them of agency. Finally, the novel and show both transform pain, suffering, and grief into transferable commodities. This allows them to disinvest the pain and tragedy suffered by the Native American characters in order to reinvest this tragic potential in white characters, which serves to reinforce their tragic heroism. This commodification of tragic potential and emphasis on its sentimentalization help obscure the settler-colonial origins and systemic perpetuation of violence against Native American women.

While Johnson's work and the television show are progressive in their treatment of Native American characters and storylines, at least in terms of the standard set by white authorship, the very fact that they are celebrated as progressive despite their many damaging flaws and misrepresentations points to how unprepared white authors and producers still are to dismantle white privilege and settler colonialism. Considering the systemic and extremely brutal character of violence against Native American women, it is not enough to simply give this violence visibility by marginally including it in a crime narrative. Instead, representations of violence against women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must go further to overturn the violences of settler-colonial dynamics. This is underlined by Allison Hargreaves when she writes that the critical analysis of representation of violence against Indigenous women "is urgently required in our present moment, in which violence is not so much invisible to the public (as some critics have argued), but is actually misrepresented in ways that pathologize Indigenous women while

normalizing systemic colonial violence in their lives."⁴⁴ It is exactly this kind of misrepresentation that we face in *The Cold Dish* as well as in *Longmire*.

The failure to recognize settler-colonial ideology in representational devices such as the stock character of the white savior, the genres of crime and Western fiction, or the color-blind conflation of violence against women not only limit the critical affordance of this representation, but also inherently reinforces white supremacy and settler colonialism. If white authors insist on continuing to use Native American cultural heritage, experiences, and characters, it is crucial for those authors to become aware of and resist settler-colonial representational strategies and continue close cooperation with Native American nations and authors, a lot of whom already offer decolonial representations of Indigenous peoples and futurities, in order to develop a fair and complex representation. The larger issue at stake in representations of Indigenous people is not so much questions of authenticity but the disruption of a symbolic order that enables settler colonialism and the acknowledgement of Indigenous sovereignty.

Notes

1. Maureen Reddy, *Traces, Codes, and Clues: Reading Race in Crime Fiction* (Chicago: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 187. [↗](#)
2. Mishuana Goeman, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping our Nations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). [↗](#)
3. Joanne Barker, ed., *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Sherene Razack, ed., *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (Auburn, ME: Between the Lines, 2002); Robyn Bourgeois, "Generations of Genocide: The Historical and Sociological Context of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls," *Keetsahnak: Our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Sisters*, edited by Kim Anderson, Maria Campbell, and Christi Belcourt (Calgary: University of Alberta Press, 2018), 65–87; Sarah Deer, *The Beginning and the End of Rape* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). [↗](#)
4. Amnesty International, *Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the USA*, 2007, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/mazeofinjustice.pdf> < <https://www.amnestyusa.org/pdfs/> >; Amnesty International, *Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada*, 2004, https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Stolen%20Sisters%202004%20Summary%20Report_0.pdf < https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/Stolen%20Sisters%202004%20Summary%20Report_0.pdf >; Native Women's Association of Canada, *Fact Sheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls*, 2011, http://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls.pdf < http://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls.pdf >; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, vol. 1a, 2019, https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf < https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf >. [↗](#)
5. Craig Johnson, *The Cold Dish* (London and New York: Penguin, 2005). [↗](#)

6. Taylor Sheridan, dir., *Wind River* (Park City, UT: Park City Studios & Lionsgate, 2017), DVD. [↗](#)
7. Maureen Reddy, "Race and American Crime Fiction," in *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, edited by Catherine Ross Nickerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 135–147. [↗](#)
8. Gina Macdonald and Andrew Macdonald, *Shaman or Sherlock: The Native American Detective* (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 2. [↗](#)
9. Ray B. Browne, *Murder on the Reservation: American Indian Crime Fiction: Aims and Achievements* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004). [↗](#)
10. A note on terminology: in this article, the term "Indian" is only used to denote the legal status of members of Native American nations or the constructed, stereotypical version of Native Americans invented and perpetuated by white culture. Otherwise, tribal names will be used where possible and "Native Americans" if speaking of Indigenous peoples in the United States in general. [↗](#)
11. Macdonald and Macdonald, *Shaman or Sherlock*, 25–43. [↗](#)
12. Tiffany Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 39. [↗](#)
13. Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). [↗](#)
14. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 186. [↗](#)
15. Hernan Vera and Andrew M. Gordon, *Screen Saviors: Hollywood Fictions of Whiteness* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 15. [↗](#)
16. Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 42. [↗](#)
17. James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1986). [↗](#)
18. Eve Tuck and Kanye Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor." *Decolonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40. While Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and settler scholar Kanye Wang are not the ones who have coined the term "settler colonialism," they offer a helpful and succinct description of it in their article "Decolonization is not a Metaphor." "Settler colonialism," they write, "operates through internal/external colonial modes simultaneously because there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony. For example, in the United States, many Indigenous peoples have been forcibly removed from their homelands onto reservations, indentured, and abducted into state custody, signaling the form of colonization as simultaneously internal (via boarding schools and other biopolitical modes of control) and external (via uranium mining on Indigenous land in the US Southwest and oil extraction on Indigenous land in Alaska) with a frontier (the US military still nicknames all enemy territory 'Indian Country'). The horizons of the settler colonial nation-state are total and require a mode of total appropriation of Indigenous life and land, rather than the selective expropriation of profit-producing fragments" (5). Another important scholar of settler colonialism, Patrick Wolfe, also describes it as a structure rather than a process. [↗](#)
19. Rachel Schaffer, "With a Little Help from His Friends: The Functions of Diversity in Craig Johnson's Walt Longmire Series," *CLUES: A Journal of Detection* 28, no. 2 (2010): 103. [↗](#)
20. Reddy, *Traces, Codes, and Clues*, 151 [↗](#)
21. Matthew W. Hughey, "Racializing Redemption, Reproducing Racism: The Odyssey of Magical Negroes and White Saviors," *Sociology Compass* 6, no. 9 (2012): 751–767. The stock character of the Magical Indian refers to an ethnic character, in this case a Cheyenne, who helps the white

protagonist on their quest thanks to their supposedly shamanistic tendencies. Matthew Hughey, who writes on "Magical Negroes," defines the magical ethnic character as "a mysterious Black character that enters a decidedly White and mainstream context. This character labors to transform the life of a lost and broken White character that has somehow fallen from social and moral grace" (752). Although Hughey discusses Black characters, the same dynamic applies in the case for Henry throughout the first novel of the series since he helps Walt to come back into his professional, social, and even intimate life after his wife's death by creating a workout schedule for Walt and helping him to clean up his cabin. It is especially in this mountain scene that the "magical" characteristic of Henry as a stock character appears. ↗

22. George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998), xiv. ↗
23. Amnesty International, *Maze of Injustice*, 61–71. ↗
24. Amnesty International, *Maze of Injustice*, 2. ↗
25. The United States Department of Justice. *Tribal Communities*. The US Department of Justice: Office on Violence against Women, December 14, 2015, <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/tribal-communities> < <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/tribal-communities>> . ↗
26. Amnesty International, *Maze of Injustice*, 2. ↗
27. Deer, *The Beginning and the End of Rape*, 4. ↗
28. Deer, *The Beginning and the End of Rape*, 6. ↗
29. Mishuana Goeman, "Indigenous Interventions and Feminist Methods." *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, edited by Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 189. ↗
30. Johnson, *The Cold Dish*, 352. ↗
31. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, "Imagining the Good Indigenous Citizen: Race War and the Pathology of Patriarchal White Sovereignty," *Cultural Studies Review* 15, no. 2 (2009): 68. ↗
32. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *Talkin' Up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and Feminism* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2000). ↗
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34. "Longmire Lives! Netflix Rescues Popular Series, Graham Greene Thrilled," *Indian Country Today*, December 3, 2014, <https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/longmire-lives-netflix-rescues-popular-series-graham-greene-thrilled-6n019vT8lkOfrPbwSBDMiA> < <https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/longmire-lives-netflix-rescues-popular-series-graham-greene-thrilled-6n019vT8lkOfrPbwSBDMiA>> . ↗
35. *Longmire*, season 1, episode, 5, "Dog Soldier," directed by Alex Graves, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, John Coveny, and Tony Tost, featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff, and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired July 1, 2012, on A&E, Warner Brothers, 2013, DVD; Child Welfare Information Gateway. *Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare*. *Child Welfare Information Gateway*. November 2016, https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/racial_disproportionality.pdf < https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/racial_disproportionality.pdf> . ↗
36. *Longmire*, season 2, episode 9, "Tuscan Red," directed by Michael Rymer, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, John Coveny, and Tony Tost. featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff,

- and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired July 29, 2013, on A&E, Warner Brothers, 2015, DVD. [↗](#)
37. *Longmire*, season 3, episode 3, "Miss Cheyenne," directed by James Hayman, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, John Coveny, and Sarah Nicole Jones, featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff, and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired June 16, 2014, on A&E, Warner Brothers, 2015, DVD. [↗](#)
 38. Vincent Schilling, Interview with A Martinez, "What Makes Longmire So Good? 'Every Character Has Demons' Says A Martinez," *Indian Country Today*, December 11, 2014, https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/what-makes-longmire-so-good-every-character-has-demons-says-a-martinez-sYCEI4H-S0qOLrbt_vOOHQ < https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/what-makes-longmire-so-good-every-character-has-demons-says-a-martinez-sYCEI4H-S0qOLrbt_vOOHQ> . [↗](#)
 39. *Longmire*, season 1, episode 10, "Unfinished Business," directed by Nelson McCormick, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, and John Coveny, featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff, and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired August 12, 2012, on A&E, Warner Brothers, 2013, DVD. [↗](#)
 40. *Longmire*, "Unfinished Business," 38:56. [↗](#)
 41. *Longmire*, season 4, episode 6, "The Calling Back," directed by T. J. Scott, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, John Coveny, and Boo Killebrew, featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff, and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired September 10, 2015, on Netflix, Warner Brothers, 2016, DVD, 20:18. [↗](#)
 42. *Longmire*, season 4, episode 7, "Highway Robbery," directed by Michael Offer, written by Craig Johnson, Hunt Baldwin, and John Coveny, featuring Robert Taylor, Katee Sackhoff, and Lou Diamond Phillips, aired September 10, 2015, on Netflix, Warner Brothers, 2016, DVD, 48:51. [↗](#)
 43. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 64, 198. Philip Deloria explains that the myth of the Vanishing American presupposes that "less advanced societies should disappear in the presence of the more advanced" (64). The most famous examples, which helped construct the Vanishing American myth, is James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*. [↗](#)
 44. Allison Hargreaves, *Violence against Indigenous Women: Literature, Activism, Resistance* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfried Laurier Press, 2017), 26. [↗](#)
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